

SITUATION REPORT NO. 16
INCIDENT NO. 2002-040
DATE: August 6, 2002 TIME: 4:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Drought/Fires – The Governor issued a state fire emergency declaration on May 30, 2002, and a state drought emergency declaration on July 1, 2002.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: The State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has received reports of two fatalities relating to rural fires, one of which occurred on May 2 and the other on May 26. To date, a total of 11 injuries have been reported during response to various fires throughout the state.
3. DAMAGES: On July 16, a fire six miles north and two miles west of Rhame in Bowman County burned approximately 100 acres in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Rhame, Bowman, and Marmath Fire Departments responded. One fire truck, manned by two area residents, remained on scene through the night to extinguish areas that may re-ignite.

On the afternoon of July 20, the N.D. Forest Service responded to a fire in Slope County near Amidon. The blaze burned 25 acres and was contained within five hours but personnel monitored the situation during the night.

In Adams County on July 20, a fire burned 10 acres of CRP. The Hettinger Fire Department extinguished the blaze.

On the evening of July 29, lightning started fires on CPR land near Fairfield in Billings County. Fairfield and Belfield Fire Departments contained the fires by 8:45 p.m. central time.

On July 30 near Lehr, lightning caused a fire that burned 60 large round bales. The Lehr Fire Department extinguished that blaze and upon returning to the station extinguished a fire before a significant number of bales were burned.

The North Dakota Agricultural Statistics Service reported that from July 29-August 4 condition of pastures and rangeland statewide was rated 26 percent very poor, 33 percent poor, 28 percent fair, 12 percent good, and one percent excellent. Statewide conditions for hay were rated 62 percent very poor to poor.

The percent of soil moisture in four categories is as follows:

	<u>Very Short</u>	<u>Short</u>	<u>Adequate</u>	<u>Surplus</u>
TOPSOIL				
This Week	18	37	43	2
Last Week	16	35	47	2

SUBSOIL

This Week	17	34	46	3
Last Week	16	30	51	3

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: On August 2, Governor Hoeven requested the President to issue an emergency declaration to help provide federal funding for a State Fire Support Task Force. The task force will be comprised of specially trained and qualified firefighters and command personnel as well as specific equipment. It is designed to partner with existing state and federal firefighting resources to assist rural fire department capabilities in areas currently most susceptible to rural fire due to unusual fuel conditions. Personnel from this task force come from state agencies (Forest Service, Parks and Recreation, Game and Fish, Department of Transportation, and Emergency Management) with previously identified fire response and support missions. National Guard personnel and facilities will also support the task force.

On July 16, the Bowman County Commission issued a drought emergency declaration.

The Stutsman County Commission issued a drought emergency declaration on July 16.

Officials from the National Forest Service issued a Level I Fire Restriction July 16 on lands within the boundaries of the Medora Ranger District of the Little Missouri National Grassland. The prohibitions will remain in effect until rescinded or revoked. Information concerning restrictions and exemptions can be found at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/dakotaprairie/>.

A Recreation, Fish and Wildlife Drought Mitigation Task Force meeting was conducted by the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department Director on July 17. Participants discussed impacts of the continuing drought on camping, hunting, and fishing in affected areas. Other issues discussed included the impacts on habitat and wild game populations. The heightened potential for depredation is also a concern. The importance of displaying daily N.D. Rangeland Fire Danger Index guides at state and federal parks and recreation areas was discussed. Representatives from the following state and federal agencies attended the meeting: N.D. Parks and Recreation, N.D. Game and Fish, N.D. Division of Emergency Management, N.D. Historical Society, N.D. Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the National Park Service.

The Pembina County Commission on July 16 adopted a resolution to mow, bale, and deliver roadside or CRP hay to drought stricken counties. Those efforts are underway. The resolution was also presented to other county commissioners for

review at a Northeast Region meeting of County Boards of Commissioners in Devils Lake on July 23.

Due to the urgent need for hay in drought-stricken parts of the state, the North Dakota (NDSU) Extension Service has established a website where hay producers including those with CRP acres and prospective buyers can directly contact one another. The site is located at

<http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/feedlist/>. The general NDSU Extension Service website has links to hay and feed listings in neighboring states at <http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu>. Producers and buyers may also contact their local extension agent to be placed on the appropriate list.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: Appropriate state, local, tribal, federal and private entity emergency operations plans (EOPs) and procedures have been implemented.

The N.D. Rural Fire Mitigation Guide and the N.D. Rangeland Fire Danger Index are posted on the N.D. Division of Emergency Management web site at:

<http://www.state.nd.us/dem/>.

Situation Reports published by N.D. Division of Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is:

<http://www.state.nd.us/dem/>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director